

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:DP

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHREN

USMISSION GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 059075

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16; WHITE HOUSE
PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 16,
1976:

Q. COULD YOU GIVE US SOME OF THE BACKGROUND OF THE PLANNING THOUGHT THAT WENT INTO THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO ALLOW THE PLO TO BE PRESENT AT THE UN RECEPTION FOR THE PRESIDENT TOMORROW EVENING?

A. WELL, IN THE FIRST PLACE, I THINK THAT WAS ADDRESSED AT SOME LENGTH AT THE WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING THIS MORNING. JODY POWELL SAID THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE MATTER. I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO ADD TO WHAT JODY SAID THIS MORNING ON THE SUBJECT. WHEN WE WERE ASKED FOR OUR -- AS A COURTESY
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WHEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL DISCUSSED WITH US THE GENERAL MATTER OF INVITATIONS, WE RESPONDED THAT THE GUEST LIST WAS ABSOLUTELY UP TO HIM AND WE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO TELL HIM WHOM TO INVITE TO THE SPEECH, AND LATER WHEN THE QUESTION OF THE RECEPTION CAME UP THE SAME THING.

THERE WAS DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S OFFICE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND WE MADE QUITE CLEAR THAT HE SHOULD INVITE WHOM HE WISHED TO THE RECEPTION, IT BEING HIS RECEPTION AND HIS HOUSE, SO TO SPEAK. SO, THAT IS REALLY ABOUT THE SUM OF IT.

Q. FRED, DID THE SECRETARY GET INTO THAT IF THE PRESIDENT DID NOT?

A. THE SECRETARY WAS INFORMED OF IT, YES.

Q. WAIT A MINUTE. IF THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT INVOLVED AND THE SECRETARY --

A. THAT IS WHAT JODY SAID THIS MORNING. HE SAID, OF COURSE WE KEPT THE WHITE HOUSE INFORMED, BUT THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE MATTER.

Q. BUT, IF THE SECRETARY WAS INFORMED, WHO WAS THE ONE

WHO MADE THE DECISION ON THIS; THE GUEST LIST, SO TO SPEAK? I MEAN, WHO WAS THE ONE? ONE, THE PRESIDENT IS NOT INVOLVED.

A. I JUST SAID WE DIDN'T DECIDE THE GUEST LIST. THAT WAS UP TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL.

Q. WELL NOW, IN THE PAST, IF I UNDERSTAND IT RIGHT, THE UNITED STATES DID OBJECT TO PLO PARTICIPATION AT CERTAIN OF ITS SPEECHES OR RECEPTIONS AT WHICH IT WOULD PROVIDE THE MAJOR FIGURE. ARE YOU NOW SUGGESTING THERE REALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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HAS BEEN NO CHANGE AT ALL IN THIS; THAT THIS IS SOMETHING QUITE CONSISTENT?

A. WELL, FIRST OF ALL, THERE IS NO ANALOGOUS SITUATION TO WHAT IS GOING TO TAKE PLACE TOMORROW NIGHT. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME. ON OTHER OCCASIONS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, WHEN THE PRESIDENT OR A HIGH OFFICIAL FROM THE UNITED STATES HAS APPEARED BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IT HAS BEEN DURING REGULAR SESSIONS. SO, THIS IS A FIRST TIME SITUATION, MARVIN.

Q. FRED, I AM NOT EXACTLY SURE I UNDERSTOOD THE ANSWER TO MY QUESTION. YOU SAID THE SECRETARY WAS INFORMED. MY QUESTION WAS REALLY: DID THE SECRETARY SIGN OFF ON THIS DID HE MAKE THE DECISION OR WAS HE INFORMED AFTER THE FACT?

A. HE WAS INVOLVED IN THE DECISION.

Q. OKAY.

Q. HE SAID ON THE HILL HE TOLD WALDHEIM IT IS UP TO HIM.

A. YES. PRECISELY.

Q. HAVE YOU ANY COMMENT ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION OF THE LEBANESE LEADER, KAMAL JUMBLATT, IN LEBANON TODAY?

A. I CAN CONFIRM THAT WE HAVE HAD A TELEPHONIC ADVICE ON THIS FROM AMBASSADOR PARKER IN BEIRUT AT APPROXIMATELY 10 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING TO CONFIRM THE WIRE REPORTS THAT MR. JUMBLATT WAS INDEED SHOT AND KILLED, MARCH 16TH WHILE DRIVING THROUGH THE VILLAGE OF DEIR DOUREIT AND THE VILLAGE OF BAKLINE IN THE SHOUF REGINE, OF LEBANON. MY COMMENT IS SIMPLY THAT WE EXTEND OUR DEEP SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF MR. JUMBLATT. I WOULD ADD THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS CONSISTENTLY DEPLORED SUCH ACTS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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VIOLENCE, AND BELIEVES THAT THEY CANNOT PROMOTE PEACE, STABILITY, AND UNITY IN LEBANON, WHICH ALL MEN OF GOOD WILL DESIRE.

Q. DOES AMBASSADOR PARKER HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHO HAD KILLED JUMBLATT?

A. I'M SORRY, SCOTT?

Q. DID AMBASSADOR PARKER HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE?

A. I UNDERSTAND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AT PRESENT REGARDING THE IDENTITY OF THE ASSASSINS.

Q. COULD I GO BACK TO THIS PLO THING?

A. SURE.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES NOW IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGING ITS POLICY OF CONTACT WITH THE PLO?

A. NO.

Q. NOT IN THE PROCESS?

A. THAT'S CORRECT -- NOT IN THE PROCESS.

Q. WAS THERE A RECOMMENDATION FROM AMBASSADOR YOUNG THAT THE P.L.O. SHOULD NOT BE SPECIFICALLY NOT INVITED TO THIS PARTICULAR OCCASION?

A. I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG, BUT I HAVE JUST SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF INVITATIONS WAS A MATTER FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, MR. WALDHEIM, TO DECIDE, AND WE MADE IT QUITE CLEAR TO HIM THAT IT WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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CERTAINLY HIS DECISION.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES LOOSENING THE TERMS UNDER WHICH IT WILL CHOOSE TO DEAL WITH THE P.L.O.?

A. YOU'RE PUTTING THIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE U.N. THING TOMORROW, MARVIN?

Q. YES.

A. THE WHITE HOUSE WAS BERY SPECIFIC ON THAT POINT THIS MORNING AND I WILL BE EQUALLY SPECIFIC. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANE TO BE ATTACHED TO THE

ATTENDANCE AT THE RECEPTION TOMORROW OR TO THE ATTENDANCE
AT THE SPEECH ITSELF, ABSOLUTELY NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

Q. I DON'T UNDERSTAND, FRANKLY, HOW YOU CAN SAY THAT
BECAUSE THERE CLEARLY IS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE ATTACHED--
PERHAPS IMPROPERLY--BY EVERYBODY. DO YOU MEAN THAT STATE-
MENT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY? I SUPPOSE YOU DO. YOU SAID IT

A. I REALLY DO. THAT'S WHY I'M REPEATING IT RATHER
EMPHATICALLY, MARVIN.

Q. HAVE THE P.L.O. OBSERVERS EVER ATTENDED A RECEPTION
GIVEN AT THE UNITED NATION'S BUILDING TO AN AMERICAN
OFFICIAL, OR HAVE THEY EVER ATTENDED A SPEECH BY AN
AMERICAN PRESIDENT, OR BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE?

A. WELL, I JUST SAID THAT THIS IS A FIRST-TIME OCCURRENCE
FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TOMORROW. ON OTHER OCCASIONS,
I THINK WHEN IT HAS BEEN IN SESSION, THERE HAVE BEEN
OCCASIONS WHEN OBSERVER MISSIONS HAVE BEEN PRESENT. NOW,
AS FAR AS BEING PRESENT WHEN AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT SPOKE,
I SIMPLY DON'T KNOW. BUT THIS IS A UNIQUE SITUATION.

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Q. HOW ABOUT AN AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE?

A. I SIMPLY DON'T KNOW, BUT THE GROUND RULES FOR ATTENDANCE
AT SUCH THINGS WHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS IN SESSION,
AND WHEN, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, NOT ONLY PERM-REPS, BUT OB-
SERVER MISSIONS NORMALLY ARE PRESENT--I SIMPLY DON'T HAVE
THE HISTORY OF ATTENDANCE AT ALL THOSE.

Q. BUT ACCORDING TO ALL REPORTS, THERE IS A BREAK WITH
TRADITION HERE, WITH ACCEPTED PROCEDURES ON THIS PARTICULAR

--

A. I DON'T KNOW WHAT REPORTS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. THIS
IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS COME TO ADDRESS
MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS WHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS
NOT BEEN IN SESSION.

Q. BUT ISN'T THIS THE FIRST SPEECH BY AN AMERICAN
PRESIDENT SINCE THERE HAS BEEN A P.L.O. OBSERVER AT THE U.N?

A. I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.

Q. THE LAST ONE WAS PRESIDENT FORD, I THINK, RIGHT AFTER
HE TOOK OVER THE PRESIDENCY IN '74.

A. I REALLY DON'T KNOW.

Q. AS A RELATED QUESTION, IS THERE ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT CONCERNING POSSIBLE OPENING OF A P.L.O. OFFICE MISSION, HERE IN WASHINGTON?

A. NO. JUST THE WAY IT WAS THE LAST TIME WE DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT.

2. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM WHITE HOUSE PRESS
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SECRETARY'S DAILY BRIEFING MARCH 16 CONCERNING ARRANGEMENTS AT THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT MARCH 17:

Q. WILL PRESIDENT CARTER ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO VISIT WITH THE PLO?

MR. POWELL: LET'S PLACE THA IN CONTEXT, IF WE CAN, WHICH I KIND OF DOUBT. BUT WE WILL MAKE A VALIANT EFFORT HERE.

THE INVITATIONS TO THIS RECEPTION AND TO THE SPEECH CAME FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS. IT WAS THE FEELING OF OUR STATE DEPARTMENT THAT THEY COULD NOT BE IN A POSITION OF TELLING THE SECRETARY GENERAL WHO HE COULD AND COULD NOT INVITE TO RECEPTIONS, PURELY A SOCIAL OCCASION, FOR WHICH HE WAS HOST AND WHICH WAS TAKING PLACE BASICALLY IN HIS HOUSE.

WE ATTACH NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS MATTER AND THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF WAS NOT EVEN INVOLVED IN THAT DECISION.

Q. NOT INVOLVED?

MR. POWELL: THAT IS RIGHT.

Q. NOT INVOLVED IN THE DECISION TO LEAVE IT TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL?

MR. POWELL: THAT IS RIGHT.

Q. WOULD THE PRESIDENT BE WILLING TO SEE A MEMBER OF THE PLO?

MR. POWELL: THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO PLANS TO MEET WITH THE PLO OR ANY OTHER DELEGATION, OBSERVER OR MEMBER. THERE ARE NO THOUGHTS OF ANY MEETING EVEN, OR PLANS OF ANY MEETING, EVEN WITH REGARD TO THE ACTUAL EVENTS THEMSELVES.
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SO IT IS A RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO

WHICH HE HAS INVITED THOSE WHOM HE SAW FIT AND WHICH THE PRESIDENT IS ATTENDING AS PART OF HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY, AS I SAID, NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE ATTACHED BY THIS COUNTRY AND THERE IS NOT MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE IN TERMS OF SOME SORT OF MEETING OR CONTACT OR SIGNAL OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

Q. WERE WE ASKED IF THEY SHOULD BE INVITED?

MR. POWELL: I DON'T BELIEVE SO. MY UNDERSTANDING WAS, BUT I WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL, AND AS I UNDERSTAND IT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S FEELING WAS THAT IT WAS NOT OUR PLACE TO TELL THE SECRETARY GENERAL WHO TO INVITE AND WHO NOT TO INVITE.

Q. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN INVITED TO PREVIOUS SIMILAR OCCASIONS, HAVE THEY, EVEN WHEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL WAS THE HOST?

MR. POWELL: THAT I DON'T KNOW. I ASSUME THE SECRETARY GENERAL COULD INVITE WHO HE CHOSE.

Q. ON THAT SUBJECT, JODY, THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAS NEVER SO FAR AS I KNOW IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ACTED WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH THE MAJOR POWERS ON ANY ISSUE. DOES THAT MEAN HE DIDN'T ASK SOMEBODY?

MR. POWELL: CERTAINLY HE CONSULTED AND HE WAS TOLD AS I UNDERSTAND IT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT AFTER THEIR DELIBERATIONS THAT THEY DID NOT WANT TO BE IN THE POSITION OF TELLING HIM WHOM TO INVITE, THAT HE COULD INVITE WHO HE CHOSE.

Q. MY QUESTION ON THE PLO, IF I MIGHT, AND I ASK IT
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BECAUSE OF THE SIGNIFICANCE THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE ATTACHED TO THIS INVITATION: PRESIDENT SADAT AND SOME OTHER ARAB LEADERS HAVE BEEN MAKING EFFORTS IN RECENT MONTHS TO PERSUADE THE PLO TO AMEND ITS CHARTER, THE SO-CALLED PALESTINE NATIONAL CONVENTION, TO REMOVE THE REFERENCES TO THE LIQUIDATION OF ISRAEL. DOES THE UNITED STATES SUPPORT PRESIDENT SADAT AND THE OTHER ARAB LEADERS IN THAT EFFORT?

MR. POWELL: CERTAINLY HE WOULD BE--I AM TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER TO PUT THIS IN THE POSITIVE OR THE NEGATIVE HERE--BUT CERTAINLY WE WOULD NOT FAVOR AN ATTITUDE OFFICIAL OR UNOFFICIAL ON THE PART OF ANY GROUP, NATION OR ORGANIZATION THAT WAS DEDICATED TOWARD THE DESTRUCTION OF ANOTHER NATION AND CERTAINLY OUR POSITION SPECIFICALLY WITH REGARD TO ISRA-

Q. THAT IS NOT QUITE WHAT I MEANT. I WAS TRYING TO BE MORE SPECIFIC. PERHAPS I DIDN'T WORD IT RIGHT. I AM WONDERING WHETHER THE UNITED STATES IS LENDING ACTIVE SUPPORT TO SADAT IN THIS EFFORT.

MR. POWELL: I CAN'T TELL YOU. I JUST DON'T KNOW IF WE ARE PLAYING ANY ROLE IN THAT AT ALL.

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Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16; WHITE HOUSE PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16 1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 16, 1976:
TAGS: PFOR, XF
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